St Gervais T-8 (no date) 1954 AVI Kashmir ANK
Dard A63

being Afghans who have migrated over the frontier—"All are Mohammedans except the tribes of Kafiristan." 181 363.

These Aryan features, those blue eyes, that light complexion, where does it come from? Not a few of the sons, grandsons and great-grandsons of the chiefs who once ruled in those parts, surprisingly claim to be descended from one of the Generals of Alexander the Great, if not from the Emperor himself. There is no record in history of his having visited those parts, but the people of Gilgit maintain that he came as close as the Tashkurgan and the Killik Pass, and then sent an expedition down through Hunza to Gilgit. It is known that Alexander did visit Dir, and it is believed that the expedition to Gilgit was to move on to Chitral and then join the main army at Dir. 174

I have never seen it hinted at in any book, but I dare to suggest that these Aryan features, blue eyes and the occasional tinge of gold in the hair found among these men of Gilgit—and also those of Kashmir—might have come about by their owners having been descended from the prisoners, deserters, or even soldiers who had become lost from the forces of Alexander. It is known that until not long ago on the North-West Frontier of India, a exposed European who was fortunate enough to be the possessor of red hair was treated with more respect than his fellows, who, if not tortured, suffered a ghastly, untimely death. Although not released, he, like the others, was handed over to the women, but remained alive to "husband" the widows, so that they might breed red-haired sons. Natural red hair is considered among some of the tribes to be a sign that the owner is the descendant of their particular prophet, if not The Prophet. A beautiful red-haired camp follower—and most "red-heads" have blue eyes—would make a fitting concubine for any King or Chieftain; a powerful, magnificent, red-headed soldier of the forces of Alexander, a fitting lover for his widow, or even husband—if he happened to be an officer—for a daughter he had been unable to marry off to one of his own rank. Can it be from such alliances as these that the red heads, pale faces and blue eyes have come to these parts? 174 826 832